

The Bloomfield Citizen.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1886.

Gas and Water Notes.

Corporations are said to be soulless. Greed, and tyranny easily hide their meanness beneath an impersonal cloak. There are exceptions to all rules. The East Orange Water Company has proved, in the main, generous in its treatment of the town and private consumers. Barring the heavy charges for introduction the service is cheap and satisfactory. In a number of streets pipes have been laid without the intervention of the Town authorities, and invariably intending customers have been met half way. If so has been intimated, a reduction of price is made to East Orange, this township will, under its contract, enjoy the same benefit. The price, \$50 per hydrant, offered by a syndicate to South Orange, would seem to indicate that reduction is possible.

Gas has steadily declined in price since the panic of '73. The Montclair Gas and Water Company was organized during the prevalence of high prices, and began with charging consumers about \$5 per thousand. Reductions have followed until \$2.90 is now the price to private consumers. This is still far above the Newark price, where \$1.80 is charged. Parties coming from the cities are naturally vexed at this high rate, and turn off the gas at once, preferring to use kerosene oil or naphtha gas. No doubt it is hard to lose the interest of an investment, but enlightened selfishness would seem to suggest that half a loaf is better than no bread. If it were known that prices would be made as low as anywhere, there would be small sale for gas-machines.

The township now pays \$13.29 per gas-lamp each year, including cost of lighting and extinguishing. These lamps burn four thousand, three hundred and seventy (4370) feet of gas per year. This is at the rate of three dollars and four cents (\$3.04) per thousand. Newark pays twenty (\$20) dollars per gas-lamp each year, including cost of lighting and extinguishing. Their lamps burn thirteen thousand, two hundred (13,200) feet of gas per year. This is at the rate of one dollar and fifty-two cents (\$1.52) per thousand.

The comparison is odious—to Bloomfield.

It would be pleasant to have the lamps lighted at least half an hour later at night for the benefit of those returning upon the eleven o'clock train. A reduction of tariff would allow an increase of service.

Since the contest with the Town authorities two years ago, the Gas Company has increased the service about one hundred lamps. Their pipes now extend through the principal streets. Yet we hear of no new private consumers. Would it not be well to do something popular? Why not cheapen the price?

Since the completion of the Gas works, \$45,000 worth of bonds have been paid. The pipe service in Bloomfield and Montclair has been about doubled, and at least one dividend paid. Considering the times, this is not a poor showing to make. The number of private consumers is, however, altogether too small. The Water Company has secured more customers in two years than the Gas Company in thirteen. Would it not be well to introduce some new blood into the Board of Directors? Surely a change is necessary.

There is some probability that an Electric Light Company will before long make a proposition to the authorities to light the streets with electricity. Meanwhile the lamplighters never seem to discover defective burners until complaint is made at the gas-works.

A new game has been started in the Central Park in New York: betting as to which of the owls will winkle first. It might prove exciting to bet as to which of the gas-lamps would go out first—if it were not so risky.

The actual cost of making gas by the new processes is said to be not more than fifty cents per thousand. Allowing another fifty cents for leakage and use of pipes, we have one dollar as cost price per thousand. Assuming this calculation to be correct, eighty cents or even fifty cents additional will make a good profit. The home works are said to be unusually well built, but if it costs so much more to make gas here it would be better to dispense with them entirely, and draw the supply from Newark, through East Orange.

The U. S. Grand Jury, at Trenton, has adjourned until next Tuesday.

A Typical Prohibitionist.

Neal Dow is a most excellent illustration of many political Prohibitionists. They deserve for the safety of the community to be shown up. With this in view we republish the following from the Tribune:

To the Editor of The Tribune:

Sir: In your article under the heading "Neal Dow Exposes Himself" there is a lack of candor not often seen in the Tribune. It may be difficult for it to learn the precise facts in relation to prohibition in Maine, because leading papers of the country ignore them; but the question of protection from the liquor traffic is so important to the interests of the country that influential newspapers may be supposed to take some pains to know about them.

There has been no untruthful pretext employed by the Prohibitionists in the last campaign, nor at any other time, nor is there the smallest inconsistency in my letters or utterances written or spoken at different times. The amendments made to our law were not such as we desired and for which we have earnestly petitioned during the last twenty years, but were partial measures, having very little effect upon the grog-shops which have not been diminished by them.

It is but a very few months since this same Mr. Dow was advocating as passionately as he now assails the Republican cause on the distinct ground that it has done much for temperance and the Democratic party nothing. Candid readers will perceive that he gives not the least trace for now trying to kill the party that he then supported. He now affirms that the amendments for which he then gave thanks were not such as "we desired."

But it is the truth, though Mr. Dow not very ingeniously conceals it, that the Prohibitionists of Maine did themselves refuse to favor the precise amendments which Mr. Dow asserts.

Ex-Governor Dingley, whose authority on this matters even Mr. Dow

will not question, said in a speech during the late canvass:

The Republican legislatures adopted every amendment, thirty in all, asked for by the State temperance conventions. To be sure, in 1848 Mr. Dow himself alone asked for a large number of amendments some of which temperance lawyers as Mr. Drummond of Portland pronounced unconstitutional, and they were not adopted.

Neither were they approved by the committee appointed by the State Temperance Convention. When Mr. Dow says that Republican legislation refused to pass amendments to the law which "we temperance men asked for," he refers to what he alone asked for, and not what the temperance men of Maine asked for through their committee.

The plain truth is that the State has followed Mr. Dow's changing notions of the legislation needed to make Prohibition more successful until nineteen-twentieths of the Prohibitionists themselves have got tired and have lost confidence in him and in his judgment.—*E.d.*

or the law has not "been greatly successful from the beginning," and has not "reduced the volume of the liquor traffic to at least one twentieth of what it was before." General Dow cannot take both sides of this issue: If the law has been a great success, and is as well executed as any other statute, it has not been absolutely nullified by Republican courts, governors, legislatures, officials, or by anybody else. But what proof does Mr. Dow give? This only, that certain cases were dismissed and others dropped, and others continued, whether for entire lack of necessary evidence or for other reasons the public has no means of knowing, except that Mr. Dow, in his passionate temper obviously prone to speak inaccurately, asserts that there was no good reason. Does he know, or is he more reliable in this assertion than in his general statement of the defects of the law?

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The Balance of Power.

TO THE BLOOMFIELD CITIZEN:

It behoves the earnest "practical temperance" men who desire to aid in destroying the baleful saloon interest in and out of politics to examine the political situation of to-day, before deciding to try once more to reform, within old party lines, to see if the case is not a hopeless one. Wily or otherwise the Prohibitionists have set up for themselves and nothing will induce them now to reconsider their action. It is admitted that their strength is increasing. Even in Maine it has nearly quadrupled, and if the movement is to continue, it is clear that the interest of all friends of temperance is in such a union of their forces as will hasten the downfall of the liquor traffic. We would call attention to significant facts which those who still hesitate on account of the fear that the old parties may be injured, should consider, and which demonstrates conclusively that the Republican party's day has gone.

The balance of power in the decisive Middle States of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut is in the hands of the Prohibitionists. First to New Jersey for the latest 3 important elections.

Rep. Dem. Pro.
1882 342,464 595,318 95,983
1884 562,011 563,648 24,499
1885 490,381 501,465 36,867

In every one of these years except 1882 when Cleveland was elected by a phenomenal majority the contest was decided by the Prohibitionists.

By the side of that statement may be put another from a letter written by General Dow, in which he says:

"There is not a word of truth in the assertion that the Maine law is a failure. On the contrary it has been a great success from the beginning. It has driven out every distillery and brewery, and has reduced the volume of the liquor traffic to at least one-twentieth of what it was before." In still another letter he said: "The Maine law is as well executed as any other on our statutes." In a letter from General Dow, published in *The Boston Post* April 29, 1884, he said:

"In more than three-fourths of our territory, containing more than three-fourths of our population, the liquor traffic is nearly or quite unknown, and we are confident that half a million will pay for all the liquors smuggled into the State and sold in violation of the law." In last week's *Independent* General Dow has a letter in which he says: "The rum-shops are comparatively few, the stocks of liquor are very small; a quart or two—at most a gallon or two—of whiskey kept carefully hidden away and sold only on the sly, or more openly only to those who are known to be friends of the contraband trade. . . . The entire State is wonderfully changed for the better." The public is entirely able to judge whether "there is not the smallest inconsistency" in these utterances of Mr. Dow.

Thus convicted by himself of grave error in the vital point of the whole controversy, namely, whether the party now in power in Maine has honestly enforced the law, and convicted also by the votes of nineteen out of twenty of the Prohibitionists of Maine, Mr. Dow next proceeds to a sweeping assertion that "the courts" not this or that court, but the courts generally, "absolutely nullify the law." Either this is a shameful untruth, Mr. Dow

is a wretched liar, or he is a simpleton.

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